

Education With unemployment on the rise and secure, high paying jobs on the decline, I strongly believe that providing our children with a quality education is the first step to improving our nation's long-term economic forecast.

PROTECTING TEACHERS AND

IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY

à Teachers are one of our most valuable resources and are critical to the success of future generations.

It is important that we begin working to develop qualified new teachers and to reward those who have dedicated themselves for years to the successful preparation of our children.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), which I supported in Congress, will renew the federal commitment to our teachers by allocating \$300 million to improve teacher quality, including \$200 million for competitive grants to school districts and states to provide performance pay for teachers and principles that raise student achievement.

Another \$100 million will fund competitive grants for states to address teacher shortages and modernize the teaching workforce.

This landmark legislation also allocated \$53.6 billion to State Fiscal Stabilization Funds.

These funds will help states to combat teacher layoffs and provide incentive and innovation grants to be awarded competitively to states and local school districts.

PROMOTING NEW EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES

à In today's global economy, students are facing an ever changing slate of challenges.

I believe it is imperative that we promote an educational system that can fully prepare students to meet these challenges.

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In this year's Omnibus Appropriations Act, I helped to secure \$190,000 in federal funding for the Indianapolis Center For Education Entrepreneurship, Inc., known as The Mind Trust.

This organization is highly experienced at developing the most innovative educational practices designed to prepare students for the modern challenges they will face after graduation.

These funds will support the Education Entrepreneur Fellowship program, which provides

ambitious entrepreneurs with an opportunity to develop fresh ideas and launch initiatives that will improve student learning, boost high school graduation rates, and expand post-graduation opportunities for aspiring young professionals.

EXPANDING AFFORDABLE HIGHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

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As American families feel the growing pressure of our ongoing economic downturn it is becoming more and more difficult for them to cover ever increasing tuition costs at institutions of higher learning.

Unfortunately, a growing number of students are unable to complete their education because of unmanageable costs.

I am a strong believer that by attending college, America's young people build better futures for themselves and their families and play a greater role in the future economic improvement of our country.

As such, I voted in the 110th

Congress to pass the College Opportunity and Affordability Act, which aims to curtail the rising costs of a college education, expand grant and loan availability, and otherwise increase attendance at colleges and universities across the United States.

In these tough economic times, many families are struggling and young Americans are losing the opportunity to go to college. The ARRA contains important provisions that seek to maintain the accessibility of high education for all students.

The "American Opportunity" tax credit and increased funding for Pell Grants will make higher education more affordable for millions of low- and moderate-income students.

INCREASED FUNDING FOR YOUTH MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS

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Studies have shown that children who have frequent, positive influences from adult role models perform better in school and are less likely to be involved with drugs or alcohol.

In turn, schools are able to better educate students when they are well behaved and engaged in their classes.

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I have been privileged to visit many of the Seventh Congressional District's most successful mentoring programs and have seen the positive effects that they have on the lives of young people.

That's why I voted to pass the Generations Invigorating Volunteerism and Education Act, legislation that will greatly expand funding for quality mentoring programs in Central Indiana and across the United States.

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RENOVATING OUR NATION'S AGING SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE

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As our nation's school-age population continues to grow, the strain on our nation's public school buildings and infrastructure is increasing greatly.

Too many of our nation's students are being educated in buildings that are outdated and overcrowded.

In the 110th

Congress, I voted in favor of the
21st Century Green High-Performing Public School Facilities Act
in an effort to provide safe and nurturing learning environments to our nation's students

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This legislation authorized \$6.4 billion for school construction projects for school modernization, renovation, and repair initiatives that have begun enhancing teaching and learning in schools in Indiana and across the country.

The ARRA is also investing \$25 billion in our nation's educational infrastructure. Through this legislation, states and local school districts will have access to bonds that will support the construction, rehabilitation and repair of public school facilities, as well as funding the acquisition of land for new public school facilities.